

**THE COST OF LIVING—THE TARIFF**

Up to about 1893, while the high tariff was an insidious means of taxing the majority for the benefit of the minority, it was claimed in its defense that workingmen in protected industries received the greater share of the steady increase in production. That is no longer the case.

By 1900 the trust movement was getting into swing, but had not fully wrought its astonishing changes. In ten years the number of manufacturing establishments had increased forty-four per cent, the total capital thirty-five per cent. The increase in value of product less the cost of raw materials was thirty-four per cent, the increase in total wages only twenty-three per cent. Production and capitalization had both grown faster than the wage fund.

"Miscellaneous expenses," a sinister term, rose sixty-two per cent.

The next five years saw the great "American invasion" of Europe by cut-rate prices, while high prices were maintained at home by trusts.

In 1905, at the end of this eventful half decade, combination was in full swing. The number of establishments had increased only four per cent, capitalization by forty-one per cent. None of the promised economies of large production had appeared. The large factories, controlling 81.5 per cent of the nominal capital, employed only 71.6 per cent of the wageworkers. The salaries account had risen by fifty per cent, and the sinister miscellaneous expenses by sixty-one per cent.

Wages and product had grown by almost the same increment, 29.9 and 29.7 per cent respectively, but both were far surpassed by the rise in salaries, superintendence and miscellaneous expense, and by the swollen capital which demands its profits either in dividends or by "unloading" stock upon the public. In Canada within the same period the total of wages paid rose by forty-five per cent. But "value product per employe" rose thirty-one per cent, the average individual wage only twenty-seven per cent. There also the wage-earner under a tariff did not get his share of increased production or of the economies of invention.

Mr. Haldane, the British war secretary, has just placed an order for 400,000 horseshoes in this country. Horseshoes are protected by a tariff of one cent a pound. Under that duty the American buyer of horseshoes pays a considerable higher price for them than the British army. This is only one recent example of the familiar fact of high prices for home consumption, low prices for the foreign buyer.

The Standard Oil monopoly is a fattened child of the tariff. Oil itself

is duty free. In practice the Standard would stamp out foreign competition as it stamps out domestic competition; and upon many of its more than a hundred by-products it is heavily protected. So it too sells abroad far cheaper than at home.

The tariff duties on potatoes, blankets, knit goods, tin plate, woollen yarns and clothing, soap, oilcloth, linen, glassware, affect directly every shopping woman; upon a thousand articles they affect her indirectly. A reasonable reduction of the tariff, not in 1909, but now, would reduce in every home the cost of living.—New York World.

**FEDERAL LIMITATIONS**

Roosevelt and Taft have joined forces this week in urging a dangerous usurpation of power by the national government. To each of these leaders of republican thought the federal authority appears the only effective power for the restraint of trusts and the great monopoly corporations. They would brush away the authority of the states by strained construction of the federal constitution, because some states, or all states, fall short of their ideas as to needed remedies for generally conceded evils.

National incorporation, which President Roosevelt so emphatically advocates, is not a democratic doctrine and will not have democratic support. Democrats will unhesitatingly join issues on that proposition. Democracy recognizes that the federal authority must be employed for the effective control of all public service corporations doing an interstate business, and perhaps, also, to some extent for the successful regulation of the great monopoly corporations that are not conducting business of a public-service character. But democracy holds that federal remedies ought to be added to state remedies, not substituted for them.

There is nothing vague in the distinction. Democracy would preserve that division of power between the states and the national government which the makers of the United States constitution planned with exceeding care and the wisest foresight. They deny the right to force implied meanings by farfetched constructions which defy the spirit of the instrument and are as unnecessary as unlawful.

It is not a proper function of the national government to compel the people of the states to administer their affairs along exactly the same lines in every state, whenever these affairs touch the interests of a corporation engaged in business of an interstate character. There is just as good a reason today as there was when the organic law of the United States was framed that the people of the various states should have unrestricted power to govern their local affairs as they please, except to the extent to which the constitution has explicitly conferred power on the federal government.

In its control of interstate commerce the United States can add to the remedies provided by state laws, without attempting to displace the states or usurp their powers. That is the function it is intended to perform under the spirit of our constitutional government which has so far preserved for us the vital elements of a true democracy. To a centralized national government, dominating puppet states deprived of every substance of individual sovereignty, the American people are as much opposed today as they have ever been, and they have more than once in the past given emphatic expression to their feeling on this subject. They will see to it that this issue is not forgotten in the campaign of 1908.—St. Louis Republic.

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